

What is claimed is:

1. A system for exercising access control over a television program comprising:

- a memory for storing television program schedule information including program titles for a plurality of television programs;
- a monitor for displaying some of the schedule information including program titles;
- an input device for selecting one of the displayed program titles for viewing a television program represented by the selected program title; and
- a parental control circuit for blocking the selected television program from being viewed as a function of the television program schedule information.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the television program schedule information comprises a telecast channel, a telecast time and a length of telecast for each of the television programs, and wherein the control circuit acquires control of a channel of a television signal corresponding to a telecast channel of one of the television programs when a telecast time of the television program equals current time, and blocks the channel for a duration equal to the length of the telecast of the television program.

3. The system of claim 2 wherein the control circuit further comprises a second memory for storing the television program schedule information for the selected program title.

4. The system of claim 3 wherein the television program schedule information for the selected program title are stored in a second memory in temporal order.

5. The system of claim 1 further comprising a blocking circuit for blocking a plurality of program scenes from being viewed wherein, an indication of a program scene to be blocked is retrieved from a television signal.

6. The system of claim 1 further comprising blocking circuit for blocking the display of schedule information on the display monitor for a blocked channel.

7. The system of claim 6 wherein the input device comprises a remote controller having at least a first key for selectively positioning a cursor on a television program displayed on the monitor, and a second key for selecting the displayed program title.

8. The system of claim 1 further comprising a vertical blanking interval decoder for extracting the television program schedule information from a vertical blanking interval portion of a television signal and storing the television program schedule information to the memory.

9. A method for controlling access to television programs comprising the steps of:

- displaying television program schedule information including program titles for a plurality of television programs on a monitor;
- marking a program title from the displayed schedule information; and
- blocking a television program represented by the marked program title from being displayed on the monitor as a function of the television program schedule information for a selected title.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of blocking a plurality of program scenes from being viewed wherein, an indication of a program scene to be blocked is retrieved from a television signal.

11. The method of claim 9 wherein the marking step further comprises the step of selectively positioning a cursor on a displayed television title, and activating an input device for entering the marked program title into a memory.

12. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of extracting the television program schedule information from a vertical blanking interval portion of a television signal and storing the extracted television program schedule information in a memory.

13. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of selectively tuning to a channel of a television signal, and wherein the blocking step further comprises the step of controlling a tuner to block the selectively tuned channel from the monitor.

14. A system for exercising access control over a television program comprising:

- a memory for storing television schedule information including program titles for a plurality of television programs;
- a monitor for displaying some of the schedule information including program titles;
- an input device for selecting one of the displayed program titles for viewing a television program represented by the selected program title; and
- a parental control circuit for blocking a plurality of program scenes from the selected television program from being viewed as a function of information retrieved from a television signal.

15. The system of claim 14 further comprising a vertical blanking interval decoder for retrieving information from a vertical blanking interval portion of the television signal and storing the retrieved information in the memory.

16. A method for controlling access to television programs comprising the steps of:

- storing television program schedule information including program titles for a plurality of television programs;
- displaying the television program schedule information including program titles on a monitor;
- selecting a program title from the displayed schedule information; and
- blocking a program scene from a television program represented by the selected program title from being displayed on the monitor as a function of the information retrieved from a television signal.

17. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of extracting the information for blocking program scenes from a vertical blanking interval portion of the television signal and storing the extracted television program schedule information in a memory.

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# **ABSTRACT**

An apparatus and method for parental control of television programs. Program schedule information including program titles are stored in a memory and displayed on a monitor. Compressed code is entered for the programs to be blocked. Alternatively, one or more program titles are selected from the displayed program schedule information for blocking by a parental control circuitry connected to a controller.